

Australia's Fossil Heritage: A catalogue of important Australian fossil Sites

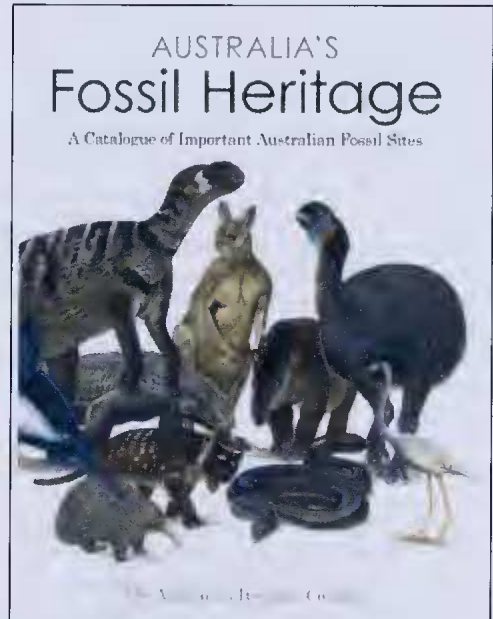
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(for The Australian Heritage Council)

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This book presents a glimpse into some of the most significant palaeontological sites across Australia, and outlines the importance of fossils from these sites to our understanding of the evolution of life on Earth. Compiled mostly by museum palaeontologists, this is a ready reference for iconic fossil sites such as the Precambrian Ediacaran early biota locations of the Flinders Ranges, South Australia, the Silurian *Baragwanathia* (vascular plant) location from near Yea, Victoria, and the Miocene mammal sites of the Riversleigh area, Queensland.

Each chapter focuses on fossil sites from a specific Australian state or territory. Within each chapter, nine to fifteen sites are discussed. For each site, information is included on general location, scientific importance, research potential and significance, fossil preservation, and other comparable fossil sites within Australia. Also included are snippets of information relating to the history of discovery and study, and on palaeoenvironments and past ecosystems. The many interesting photographs and illustrations of fossils, and beautiful colour reconstructions of ancient biotas, enhance the visualisation of Australia's faunas and floras from deep time. Also included are a glossary of terms and a diagram of the geological timescale, which are useful for the general reader. The 'references and further reading' list enables the reader to access original sources of information.

This book includes discussion on fossil sites that are important to both the biological and earth sciences, although there are few sites included that highlight the significance of micropalaeontological or palynological studies to the development of Australia's petroleum industry. Similarly underrepresented, are sites that highlight the relevance of these types of palaeontological studies to our understanding of past climates and oce-



anic change. Nonetheless, this book presents a carefully considered inventory of Australian fossil sites of significant heritage value.

This is a fascinating general reference book on Australian palaeontology somewhat in the tradition of Frederick Chapman's *The Book of Fossils*, (1934, Shakespeare Head Press, Sydney). The information and illustrations in this new book will engage the specialist palaeontologist as well as the general interest reader. I recommend it to anyone who has an interest in Australian palaeontology and/or natural heritage.

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